



AN AMERICAN POINT OF VIEW: Joseph Reed

Letter to General Charles Lee, November 21, 1776:

. . . . You have decision, a quality often wanted in minds otherwise valuable, and I . . . have no doubt had you been here the garrison of Mount Washington would now have composed part of this army. All these circumstances considered, I confess I ardently wish to see you removed where I think there will be little call for your judgment and experience to the place where they are likely to be so necessary, not am I singular in my opinion. Every gentleman of the family, the officers and soldiers generally, have a confidence in you--the enemy constantly inquire where you are, and seem to be less confident when you are present. . . . General Washington's own judgment, seconded by representations by us, would, I believe, have saved the men and their arms, but unluckily General Greene's judgment was adverse. This kept the General's mind in a state of suspense till the blow was struck. Oh! General, an indecisive mind is one of the greatest misfortunes that can befall an army; how often have I lamented it this campaign. . . .

Source: William B. Reed, ed. *Life and Correspondence of Joseph Reed* (Philadelphia, 1847).